

**Town of Vernon  
Hockanum River Linear Park Committee  
Minutes – March 22, 2019**

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**Present:** Members: George Arthur, Ginny Gingras, Ann Letendre, Joe King

Staff: Marty Sitrer; Guest: Don Bellingham

(HRLP meeting called to order at 9:35 am by Chairman Ann Letendre)

**1. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of previous meeting of Jan 25, 2019 were approved, motion by George, second by Joe.

**2. Old Business**

**A. Hockanum River Trail Reports**

Refer to Arthur report and Vernon Greenway Volunteers report (attached) for details.

Don discussed the upcoming May 2 kickoff meeting of the VGV. Trail maps have been updated,  
Don shared with the group.

**B. Review of needs – Hockanum River Parks and Parking Areas**

- a. Dart Hill South to Lyman Bridge – Need to re-visit this area for erosion over winter
- b. Dart Hill North to WPCA - George reported that the retaining wall in a section behind Sherwood Arms needs some repair. George will take care of it at some time in the future.
- c. Walgreen Corner OK, someone is taking care of the area
- d. Saxony Mill Park OK.
- e. Paper Mill Corner Park – OK
- f. West Main St - OK
- g. Tankerhoosen Dam (Phoenix St) - OK
- h. Rails to Trails – Rockville Spur – OK

**C. Current Projects – Status**

**A. Report from Friends HRLP on Grant for Bridge and Boardwalk**

- 1. Suspended Bridge – Remaining tasks:
  - a. Landscaping: Completed
  - b. Crosswalk and road signs: Completed by Vernon Public Works
  - c. Signs: Ann received quote from Sign Connection for \$1162 for metal historical sign.  
Recognition sign also has to be drafted and installed. Ann will do.
  - d. Video: Completed – Video is available on Town website home page.
  - e. Future Management – Don said the VGV could take on the site. Maps are updated.
- 2. Pleasantview Boardwalks – Status  
Additional at-grade boardwalk is needed for about another 190 feet. A wetlands permit was received.  
  
Remaining work: Plantings will be completed by Jeff Hutton in the coming month. The Pannier interpretive sign needs to be installed. A recognition sign needs to be ordered and installed also. Ann will get quote from Sign Connection. A kiosk had been planned for the site; Ann will look at funds to see if still feasible.
- 3. Property Easements - Pleasantview to Manchester line: Ann reiterated that the DOT permit had been received. No further action on easements.

4. Costs – Costs are unchanged from previous report.

Ann applied to DEEP CT Recreational Trails Program for additional funding for the boardwalk. The application was approved. Funds are expected June, 2019.

**D. Report from Friends HRLP on CT Trail Census:** Don reported that John Horan has been working with him on the project, the final numbers are in for the year. Vernon placed second in total numbers of users, up from third place last year. Fifteen trails in the state participate in the census. Don will work with Marty to prepare a press release.

**E. Potential Projects and New Grant Applications** - No new applications, other than add-on to existing contract, above.

**F. River Protection: Actions, Public Education** – Ann discussed the Sustainable CT project, and Town of Vernon's participation.

### **3. New Business**

1. "Connectivity Grant" (19 Grove St) Ann reported that the Town of Vernon has received two grants to connect the end of the Rockville spur at Vernon Ave with the 19 Grove Street area, via Rockville streets. Thereafter, it will connect with Tolland trails at Shenipsit Lake. Most of the funding will be for road and street work for a safe urban walking and bike trail. Town administration has asked Ann to represent the HRLP Committee on town staff planning meetings to implement the grant.

#### **2. Hockanum River Master Plan – Trail Needs Assessment**

George drafted a detailed needs assessment of the five trail segments of the Master Plan. The main remaining incomplete section is in Segment One, near I-84 and the commercial properties. George has come up with a solution for getting around the DOT structure. George thinks the section of trail owned by Circle Associates is one of the most scenic; he thinks we could put some boardwalk structures to make crossing that area next to the river feasible. Ann will have copies made of the report for future reference.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 am, motion by George, second by Ginny.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Letendre, Chairman

### **ARTHUR REPORT – January 25 -March 22, 2019**

The HRLP status report I mentioned in the January report has been updated as of March 16, 2019. I changed the direction of the map figures to be the same direction as the maps in the Master Plan GIS map of 2009 and improved the image details. It contains 7 pages of text and 41 pages of illustrations. The majority of the report pertains to Segment One of the Master Plan. It mostly covers the HRLP Trail from Manchester to the Lyman bridge. It is intended to be useful to trail builders as work continues to complete the Vernon HRLP trail. Sections of the report might be useful for distribution in correspondence.

The trail path from Kelly Rd to the Manchester side of the I-84 underpass might be successfully completed without much additional work. The most concern is whether we can get DOT permission to cross the drainage channel using the dam instead of a bridge.

I have flagged a proposed access path for the Wendy section of the trail. It would connect past the settlement basin on Town property to the road at Starbucks.

I flagged a proposed access path to Kelly Rd if we cannot get approval to use Weston Pl road. It would require additional permission to access using Tri-City pavement.

**Shenipsit Trail news:**

David Hatch was approved as the CFPA trail manager for the 13 mile section of the Shenipsit Trail that I was managing. It passes thru Vernon on the Rail Trail, Valley Falls Park, Belding WMA, and Tankerhoosen WMA.

**Vernon Greenways Volunteers Report  
January 25 to March 22, 2019**

Census Data 2019

Census monitor at Church Street checked for proper operation weekly.

Spring Kickoff Meeting

Spring Kickoff Meeting signals the start of the season. It is scheduled for May 2, 2019 at Camp Newhoca at 6:00 PM. Guest speaker is Felicia Ortner, a Ct Master Wildlife Conservationist and bear enthusiast, will provide education and facts about bears and help dispel myths and common misunderstandings. Felicia has been studying bears for over 30 years and in the 1990's created an education program called the Bear Reality.

I will discuss what was accomplished in 2018 and what is expected for 2019.

20 free reading books on bears for age group 2 to 6 will be made available by Mark Cadman for participants.

Dessert will be served.

Darth Hill South and Dart Hill North Trail Map Revisions

Wording for adding on the David Smith Bridge (DHN) and trail to Ellington town line and the additional trail with boardwalk to Pleasant View Drive (DHS) has been completed. I will be coordinating the map portion on Monday, March 25.